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Empowered and hyper(des)connected audiences: Actors, contexts, experiences and educommunicative practices

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Focus

Over the last decade, journalism and communication have been affected by the evolution of the classic paradigm of transmitter-media-receiver. In this model, it was traditionally the protagonist that issued the message. Now, however, there is a move towards a model built from, by and for the audiences. These audiences have been greatly empowered by the impact of technology. They have an entire media universe (real and virtual) in the palm of their hands, just a single click away. A contradictory scenario is therefore established, whereby technological hyperconnectivity does not imply an emotionally connected audience. Thus, a high level of media consumption does not necessarily favor the development of well-informed societies. In fact, there are studies that warn of growing audience dissatisfaction, not only towards the consumption of news, but also towards the entertainment on offer. Audiences, increasingly more emotional and more tribal in regards to certain communities, are more interested in establishing communication links between the stories that matter to them and those that they can relate to. The potential for audience backlash poses new challenges for journalists: an empowered audience means we must take the initiative early on in the creation of a critical public capable of appreciating quality journalism and communication, essential features that must be promoted within media education. This monographic issue aims to address, from a broad and transdisciplinary perspective (educommunication), the different debates that arise around the digital audience.

Descriptors

- Media and news' prosumption.
- Innovation and creativity in communication products. New formats and new narratives to connect with the audience.
- Professional profiles to measure, retain and create dialogue with the audience.
- Challenges in audience research from the educommunication perspective.
- Social media and user communities.
- Journalistic actions and media strategies for hyper(dis)connected audiences.
- Media education: communicative competence, digital competence, media competence.
- Audiences that are diverse, active, plurilingual, intercultural and equally educated.
- Virtual audiences and automated segmentation.

Questions

- How has the media and news consumption evolved, and what is the current situation?
- How do new technologies, in particular the use of mobile phones, affect media and news consumption?
- How, when, where, why and to what extent do young people (Generation Z) consume the news?
- What processes of communicative interaction characterize citizens' behavior?
- How can mediatization processes be made into incentives for social participation?
- Which professional profiles have been incorporated into the media to measure, analyze, retain and create dialogue with the audience?
- What strategies are being implemented to improve bonds with the public?
- How does the innovation and creativity of formats and narratives influence the consumption of news and of communicative products?
- What are the main challenges in audience research?
- What role do algorithms play in the formation and control of audiences in the media and on digital platforms?
- What's new regarding the use of social networks and user communities?
- How do journalistic movements and strategies influence the approach to hyper(dis)connected audiences?
- What social and ethical dilemmas arise as part of digital, physical and biological convergence?
- How can digital communication be utilized in the classroom?
- Is media education enough to create critical audiences? How do public policies influence the creation and development of new audiences?
- What can be done in the classroom to improve the preparation of diverse, active, multilingual, intercultural and equally educated audiences?
- To what extent have media education programs evolved and increased their effectiveness in educating these audiences?

Editors

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Professor of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising in the Faculty of Communication Sciences at the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC). His research is focused on the field of information and audiovisual fiction, particularly on the analysis of radio and television news content, on which he has published numerous books and scientific articles. He is a member of the Novos Medios research group, coordinator of the Doctoral Program in Communication and Contemporary Information, and Director of the Department of Communication Sciences at USC.

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Dr. Ana-Isabel Rodríguez-Vázquez (Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, España)

Associate Professor in the Department of Communication Sciences at the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC). Her research revolves around audience studies, with a focus on media and news consumption, media strategies and public policies, professional profiles related to measurement, loyalty and dialogue with the public, new formats and user communities. In addition, she has also conducted extensive research on audiovisual information, related to what has been published in prestigious journals and publishing houses. Rodríguez-Vázquez has participated in international stays at the Universities of Minho (Braga, Portugal); Sapienza (Rome) and Florence. She is a member of the Audiovisual Studies (GEA) research group and a collaborator with the Novos Medios group.

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